

ST. JOSEPH MAUMEE PREPARATORY: A CLASSROOM OVERVIEW

Mission: St. Joseph Maumee Preparatory is committed to preparing students in the middle school grades for high school academics in the context of Catholic faith formation. Students will excel in a 21st Century learning environment through critical thinking, project-based learning, and progressive education models.

- SJM Prep will have a maximum number of 75 students the first year. Twenty-five students will be admitted in each class of grades 6, 7, and 8.
- SJM Prep will follow the Common Core Standards curriculum set by the State of Ohio and the Diocese of Toledo
- The primary method in which the curriculum will be taught will be Project Based Learning (PBL). Direct instruction will be utilized when necessary. Studies show rigorous projects help students learn key academic content and practice 21st Century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration and communication.
- SJM Prep will integrate best-practice instructional methods and technology into its curriculum by providing each student with a state-of-the-art Apple iPod touch and the use of Apple MacBook Airs, both of which will be used to enhance student learning, as well as connect them to a global educational community. This initiative will enable all students at SJM Prep to engage in a one-to-one, technology-driven, educational experience.
- SJM Prep will engage students to be active, involved and connected to their Catholic faith through St. Joseph Parish. Students will participate in daily religion classes, weekly Mass, monthly Adoration, and Reconciliation.
- Service Learning integrates critical thinking education into the project. Students are active participants in understanding, integrating, and applying knowledge from the core subjects while improving their community.

SJM PREP: A SCHOOL FOCUSING ON PROJECT BASED LEARNING (PBL)

What is PBL: A systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions, and carefully designed products and tasks. PBL offers the students of SJM Prep the opportunity to investigate authentic topics of interest to them, thus engaging them in the learning process in ways that traditional instruction does not.

PBL is much more than a book report or science lab at the end of a unit. These projects dig much deeper and offer our students:

- Authenticity
- Academic Rigor
- Applied Learning
- Active Exploration
- Adult Connections
- Assessment Practices

Here is an Example of a PBL Inquiry:

MAUMEE RIVER WATER PROJECT

Driving Question: How safe is our water?

Content Standards that need to be taught throughout the year:

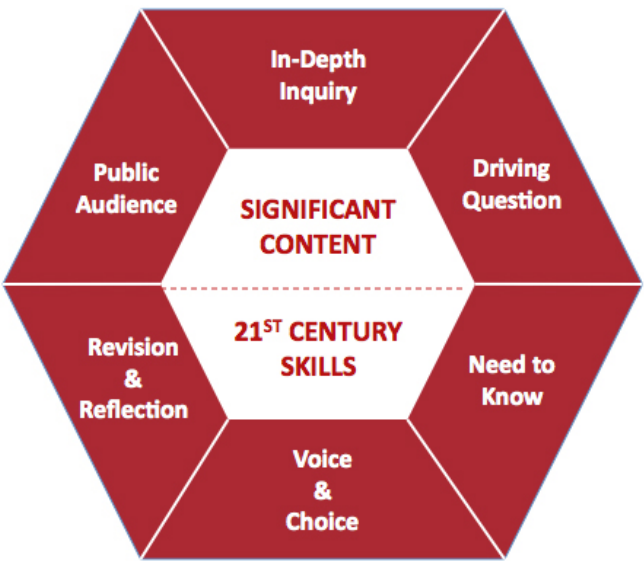
Earth Science: The Water Cycle

Biology: Changes in the ecosystem over time

Physical Science: Elements, compounds, mixtures and scientific method

The year in Science class might be divided into three phases:

1. Water as a resource
2. The physical properties of water
3. The biology of bodies of water



A TYPICAL THURSDAY AT SJM PREP - 6TH GRADE

9:10 a.m. - All-School Mass at St. Joseph Church.

10:00 a.m. - Social Studies Class: The teacher will introduce 15 vocabulary words that will be learned this week as the students study about early civilizations such as Mayans and Incas. Rather than have the students hand-write definitions in their notebook, the students will instead use Apple MacBook Airs to create an iMovie video project that incorporates photos of each word and subtitles that ask the question, “What is an aqueduct?” The students will then record themselves speaking the definition into the video project. The final project will be a video the students can utilize as a study aid to prepare for a vocabulary quiz.

10:45 a.m. - Math Class: students will be introduced to weights and measurements through graphing on either the MacBook Air or iPod Touch. Using the app software Numbers, students will track the amount of water used in their homes and our school, thus engaging in a deeper understanding of weights and measurements.

11:15 a.m. - Reading Class: students will be reading “A Cool Drink of Water” by Barbara Kerley. This book was chosen as a cross curricular resource to introduce concepts that support the science teacher’s upcoming project-based learning lesson on water quality and conservation.

12:00 to 12:35 p.m. - Lunch and zoned-recess

12:35 to 1:20 p.m. - Religion Class: “God created a good universe and invites humans to respect it.” Religious speaker might be a Franciscan sister who embraces this idea.

1:25 - 2:10 p.m. - Science Class: Students will begin a month-long project that will explore what is in the Maumee River. The focus will include measuring the acidity, pollution and life forms in and along the river and riverbanks of the Maumee River. Students will build a classroom aquarium and stock it with aquatic life similar to that found in the Maumee River. Also, they will measure water usage and waste by keeping a Water Log. Students will consult with professionals in Maumee to obtain maps of the river. Students will become experts at taking water samples. Working in teams, the students will be taught how to use sophisticated instruments used in biology labs (possibly from a local college). A team will video record how testing is done. The final phrase of the project, students will create graphics and maps of the actual test results to share with the school, parents, and Maumee City Council.

2:15 - 3:00 p.m. - Specials: (Note: Art, Spanish, Music and Physical Education will be on a rotating schedule)

A TYPICAL TUESDAY AT SJM PREP - 7TH GRADE

9:05 a.m. - Science Class: Germs - what is causing our school’s absences? Students will track weekly attendance in each class, create graphs, and look for trends in the data. Students will research to see if schools in the area are experiencing the same rate of absences. What can be done to help students fight illness and attend school more regularly.

10:00 a.m. - English Class: Using MacBook Airs, students will write a persuasive essay about the importance of washing hands properly. They will create an audio Public Service Announcement with Garage Band Music software to be shared during morning announcements.

10:45 a.m. - Math Class: Surface area and volume. Direct instruction via interactive white boards on math formulas and how to calculate correctly. Students will use iPods to check their calculations on ten problems completed during class.



11:15 a.m. - Social Studies Class: Middle ages: Discussion about the Plague. Students will watch a short YouTube video on the Plague and learn about the variety of illnesses that impacted the people during the Middle Ages. Students will participate in a classroom experience (headed by the local hospital laboratory) using GloGerm that shows how germs can transfer from person to person, to objects, and from animals. How was life different before the Plague arrived? The path will be tied to the Catholic Church and economic conditions of the times.

12:00 to 12:35 p.m. - Lunch and zoned-recess

1:25 - 2:10 p.m. - Religion Class: Curing the Lepers (Luke 17): Students will create a script that tells the story of the Lepers. Once the script is complete, the students will act out the parable and film with iPod Touches and edited on the MacBooks. Once completed, the finished project will be uploaded Teacher Tube.

2:15 - 3:00 p.m. - Specials: (Note: Art, Spanish, Music and Physical Education will be on a rotating schedule)

A TYPICAL WEDNESDAY AT SJM PREP - 8TH GRADE

9:05 a.m. - Science/Health Class: How do seat belts work and have seat belt laws improved the safety of Ohio drivers? Students will gather data from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), National Safety Council (NSC), surveys and the Ohio Department of Transportation. They will also analyze data from car manufacturers. Students will then create sample demonstrations to illustrate seatbelt effectiveness. Such demonstrations may include components such as an unsecured driver with toy cars, a downhill slope, wall, and eggs to observe and video record on iPods the effects. This video could be edited into slow motion, and then coupled with audio and statistics. Students will be asked to show their findings and presentation to new high school drivers.

10:00 a.m. - English Class: Students will write a comprehensive research paper. Research skills including proper citation of sources, utilizing an online writing lab such as owl.english.purdue.edu. MLA (Modern Language Association) style will be integrated into individual research paper.

10:45 a.m. - Math/Pre-Algebra or Algebra Class: Solve multiple step linear equations and inequalities involving +, -, x, and /, graphically, symbolically and using graphing calculator on the iPod Touch. Data from experiment with Safety Belt/Unsecured Driver project will be graphically displayed.

11:15 a.m. - Social Studies Class: Civil War - Ken Burns' mini-series novels on the Civil War is incorporated. As a section is viewed, the students will dissect the information and write in their personal journal via MacBook and Google Docs. This will prepare students for their annual trip to Washington, D.C.

12:00 to 12:35 p.m. - Lunch and zoned-recess

12:35 to 1:20 p.m. - Religion Class - Confirmation preparation via Service Learning; The mission of Catholic Church is to evangelize. Students will visit and serve at Helping Hands of St. Louis.

1:25 - 2:10 p.m. - Spanish Class: Daily for high school credit

2:15 - 3:00 p.m. Physical Education Daily for High School Credit (Art and Music will rotate)

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CRITICAL THINKING



COLLABORATION



COMMUNICATION



ST. JOSEPH MAUMEE
PREPARATORY
A Middle School Partnership with Central Catholic High School

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